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ABSTRACT

In response to a growing interest among educators in improving aesthetic education, this paper explores aesthetic response, defined as what happens in the mind and body of a person who encounters an aesthetic object or phenomenon. An initial section overviews the major theories of aesthetic response, including the work of Plato, Aristotle, Freud, Santayana, Bullough, Read, Feldman, Kierkegaard, Bergson, Dewey, and Tolstoy. The works of modern writers in the field such as Madenfort, Chandler, Holden, and Eisner are also explored. The second section of the paper postulates a theoretical model of the aesthetic response in two phases: intuitive apprehension of reality and cognitive apprehension of reality. The eight stages of the cognitive mediation phase of aesthetic response, i.e., preference, critical analysis/evaluation, judgment, the value decision, accommodation, choosing, acting, and ideating-imaging are defined. Conditions which facilitate aesthetic response are discussed. An illustration of the aesthetic response model is included. (JAC)

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Aesthetic Response: An Overview of Selected Theories and the Postulation of a Model

by

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Overview of Selected Theories of Aesthetic Response

Over the last few years there has been a growing interest among educators in improving aesthetic education in the schools. Leaders in art education and aesthetic education have realized that such improvements must be based upon a firmer philosophical foundation than now exists for aesthetic education and have consequently proposed research into such specific areas of the field as: aesthetic value systems, evaluation methods for aesthetic education, **curriculum and instruction, staff development, aesthetic response (Madeja, 1976, p. 4-13).**

It is the purpose of this paper to explore one of these specific areas, that of aesthetic response, by first presenting a brief overview of the major theories held on the topic and then postulating a theoretical model of the aesthetic response; for it is insight into the nature of the response itself which will determine the process of educating for such response.

Aesthetic response is defined here as what happens when a person encounters an aesthetic object or phenomenon, specifically, what occurs in the mind and body of the percipient when he sees a Michelangelo sculpture, observes a Shakespearean tragedy, listens to a Chopin sonata, smells an autumn day or watches a sunset. Aesthetic response then is human behavior toward works of art, both man-made and natural. (As here defined, aesthetic response does not include the experience of the artist during creation of a work of art; such a topic would fall under the rubric of creative experience.)

Beginning with Plato, a few philosophers interested in that field of philosophy later named aesthetics, have articulated theories of the aesthetic response; several contemporary art educators, art critics, and aestheticians have also developed conceptions of the process. In addition to theory about

the aesthetic response, there have been (beginning with Fechner in the 1860's) experimental studies of aesthetic response. The experimental approach is restricted to quantitative measurement using laboratory and statistical procedures. These studies have been of three types: measurement of subjects' stated preference for works of art or (more usually) preference for specific elements of works of art such as color, shape,or texture; categorization of subjects' verbal comments and non-verbal movements when confronted with art works; measurement of physiological changes during perception of art objects, e.g., changes in pulse rate,GSR (galvanic skin response), brain wave patterns, blood pressure. D. E. Berlyne refers to this whole experimental field as psychobiological aesthetics and the reader is referred to his Aesthetics And Psychobiology (1971) and Studies In The New Experimental Aesthetics (1974) for a full discussion of experimental aesthetics. The scope of this paper is limited to an exploration of theory about aesthetic response.

Most theorists who have addressed aesthetic response can be seen as falling into one of the following camps (with a few outlying tents): (1) aesthetic response as release of the viewer's feelings; (2) aesthetic response as objectified pleasure; (3) aesthetic response as psychic distance; (4) aesthetic response as empathy; (5) aesthetic response as sensuous immediacy; (6) aesthetic response as union of the percipient and the aesthetic object/phenomenon; (7) aesthetic response as association; (8) aesthetic response as dependent upon what the viewer brings to the experience (such as aesthetic attitude. imagination, critical thinking skills, art/aesthetic knowledge). These camps could be seen as falling along a continuum from the emotional (and usually subjective) response to the intellectual (and more objective) response. Discussion of the theorists will begin with aesthetic response as emotion and move along the continuum to aesthetic response as interpretation.

Both Freud and Aristotle view aesthetic response as a time when the percipient releases emotions which were within him before he perceived the aesthetic object and which, for various reasons, he has not been able to deal with otherwise; that is, aesthetic objects are seen as catalysts for the expression of pent-up emotions. For Aristotle, aesthetic response is catharsis; the percipient of a work of art exercises emotions depicted in the work thus purging thene emotions from himself. The most familiar example is the cathartic response to drama wherein emotions of pity and terror are purged during the viewing of a tragedy.

In Civilization And Its Discontents (p. 25, 33-5, 38-9) Freud portrays aesthetic response as sublimation of wishes, desires and fantasies. According to Freud, during aesthetic response the percipient finds fulfillment of socially unacceptable desires and fantasies (usually sexual in nature). Unfulfilled wishes/desires/fantasies, originating in the unconscious, are triggered by the content of the work of art (symbols, shapes, color, etc.) and are satisfied by it (similar wishes/desires/fantasies also having been fulfilled by the artist in creating the work of art). Thus the art object is used as a substitute gratification and the percipient's enjoyment of the work of art derives mainly from the satisfaction of his own infantile wishes/desires/fantasies (Sterba, p. 632-3).

Keeping the feelings in the object, that is, separate from the viewer, is the position of both Santayana and Bullough. The philosopher Santayana sees aesthetic response as the objectification of pleasure (Santayana, p. 641-3). The pleasure of the viewer is perceived as a quality of the aesthetic object/phenomenon. Beauty is pleasure objectified, and the aesthetic response is the process by which pleasure is objectified.

Like Santayana, Edward Bullough, in his theory of aesthetic response as psychical distance sees the feelings as belonging to the object/phenomenon rather than to the viewer. Psychical distance has nothing to do with temporal or spatial distance, but is defined as the mental or emotional distance between the viewer and the art object. Bullough suggests that the viewer maintain psychical distance between himself and the art object by looking at the aesthetic object/phenomenon objectively, by allowing himself only such responses as emphasize the objective features of the experience. He suggests that the viewer interpret his subjective feelings not as aspects of his own being, but rather as characteristics of the object/phenomenon (Bullough p. 647-8).

Herbert Read and Edmund Feldman are representative of thinkers who view aesthetic response as empathic. Philosopher and art critic Herbert Read recognizes three aspects to aesthetic response: empathy, intuitive Gestalt organization, and imagination. Empathy is a sympathetic identification established between the spectator and a perceived object, during which the spectator discovers elements of feeling in the work of art and identifies his own sentiment with these elements -- e.g., he discovers spirituality, aspiration, etc., in the pointed arches and spires of a gothic cathedral (Read, 1958, p. 24). Empathic response or feeling-into involves emotions evoked by the forms of the perceived object (Keel, p. 5). Read's second aspect of aesthetic response is supported by Gestalt psychology; aesthetic response involves the intuitive gestalt perception and organization of stimuli, i.e., beauty is the "good gestalt" and man has a natural tendency to seek and respond to this good gestalt (Keel, p. 6). Another aspect of aesthetic response to Read is imagination; Read states, "Images ... assume an autonomous activity, combine by way of analogy and metaphor, and produce an effect in us which may be merely personal or sensational and which, when pleasurable, is called beautiful; or may be

supra-personal and will then convey what Goethe calls 'the deepest secrets of creation ...'" (1960, p. 51).

Empathy is also an important aspect of Edmund Burke Feldman's theory of aesthetic response. This contemporary art educator describes empathy as "feeling into" the work of art so that the percipient almost becomes what he sees or hears, i.e., the work of art. In Becoming Human Through Art, Feldman (p. 289-90) contends that, when in tune, the body of the percipient converts artistic signals into feelings and ideas. This occurs by way of imitation; the body tries to imitate what the senses detect in the aesthetic object/phenomenon. These may not be overt imitations -- we may suppress the desire to respond with large-scale body movements and may respond instead with many imperceptible small-scale movements; these tiny neuro-muscular motions are experienced as ideas and feelings. Empathy then is the inner imitation of what the percipient hears or sees in the work of art; the lines, colors, shapes, sounds, in the art object trigger bodily feelings, and awareness of these bodily feelings causes the percipient to ascribe these emotions to the work of art itself -- he perceives these emotions in the work of art.

Like Bullough, Feldman sees psychic distance as an important condition of aesthetic response. Enjoyment depends upon maintaining enough psychic distance to remember that it is art and not life that is being experienced. Too much psychic distance results in boredom while too little psychic distance results in complete identification and consequent lack of enjoyment (Feldman, p. 291).

In addition to empathy and psychic union, as aspects of aesthetic response, Feldman (p. 292-4) describes a third and crucial aspect which he terms "funding and fusion". The percipient's mind responds to an aesthetic object by funding all the perceived details and fusing them into a single unified feeling or

quality. Fusion is influenced by (1) unity within the work of art itself and (2) the ability of the viewer to delay fusion. Dozens of ideas and images build up in the mind of the percipient and finally tolerance for the multiplicity of ideas gives way and they are funded and fused to produce one general impression. When this finally occurs (and it does so unconsciously) the aesthetic object suddenly makes sense. Feldman (p. 293) advocates delaying fusion in a conscious effort by avoiding becoming too fascinated with particular details and deeping the eye roving over the entire object.

Soren Kierkegaard views aesthetic response as sensuous immediacy. To him, the response is characterized by feeling emotions in the present time, i.e., in their immediacy. He sees aesthetic response as one of three ways in which we experience our own existence (Madenfort, 1974, p. 7). The aesthetic level of experiencing is characterized by immediacy, the ethical level by the universal (conceptual abstraction), and the religious level transcends the other two -- feeling and reflection are forsaken in complete surrender to God. Movement between these three levels is not a gradual transition, but is a leap made by conscious decision. Aesthetic response then is dictated by feeling rather than conceptual reflection and it is feeling which is momentary, sensuous, in-the-present feeling. If pleasure is reflected upon then the response is no longer aesthetic but is ethical; the experience is preserved past the immediacy of the moment via mediation of concepts. Feelings of pleasure are still experienced at the ethical level but here the viewer chooses to experience them by reflecting upon them -- thus removing himself from living in the moment (p. 7).

Art educator, Wellington Madenfort's theory of aesthetic response derives directly from the thinking of Kierkegaard. Madenfort (1972, p. 10) contends that we respond to what we see in one of two distinct ways -- by symbolic/conceptual behavior and by aesthetic behavior. Like Kierkegaard, he defines

aesthetic response as grasping aesthetic objects/phenomena in the sensuous immediacy as they are given without the mediation of concepts. Conceptualizing and talking about aesthetic objects will occur, but is not considered as part of aesthetic response and, in fact, when it occurs too soon tends to block aesthetic response (1972, p. 10).

A majority of thinkers on the subject of aesthetic response view it as a union of the observer and the aesthetic object/phenomenon. This view is rooted in the philosophy of Henri Bergson. Bergson (1911, p. 157) sees aesthetic response as the viewer entering into immediate sensuous communion with reality itself. To Bergson (1912, p.55), reality (élan vital) cannot be really known by conceptual and abstract thought but only in the immediacy of aesthetic union during which the essence, the meaning, is grasped from within, from the object's point of view; this is possible only when the viewer is fused with the object. Bergson terms this aesthetic union, intuition (1912, p. 23) and further describes it as the subject placing itself within an object in order to coincide with its inexpressible qualities, to bring about direct vision of the mind by the mind without the intervention of concepts, or relative spatial positions (points-of-view), or language. Thus, to Bergson, aesthetic response is intuitive apprehension of the reality of an aesthetic object/phenomenon.

Leo Tolstoy, the Russian author, like Bergson, sees aesthetic response as a union; but unlike Bergson, whose intuitive union is a private experience between the viewer and the object, Tolstoy posits a union with social overtones. In "What is Art?" (Weitz, 1959) he describes the respondent as receiving the artist's feeling via the work of art and experiencing those feelings himself. He portrays aesthetic response as emotional communion between the viewer and (1) the work of art, (2) the artist who created it, and (3) all those who simultaneously, previously or subsequently receive the same artistic impression;

thus the viewer feels united with all others as brothers (p. 621).

Monroe Beardsley, contemporary philosopher of art criticism, sees aesthetic response as a special unity of experience: first of all, unity is perceived in the work of art; then this perceived unity causes affects, feelings, emotions, expectations and satisfactions of expectations; then these affects are unified among themselves; finally, the unified elements of the work of art and the unified affects caused by the work of art unite to produce a higher-order unity -- this constitutes the aesthetic response and distinguishes it from the non-aesthetic response (Dickie, p. 17).

Although Abraham Maslow does not view aesthetic response as union with the object, he does perceive such response as purely emotional, therefore his ideas will be presented at this time before proceding to discussion of the theorists who hold a more intellectual view of the aesthetic response. To Maslow, aesthetic response is a form of peak experience (Dennis and Powers, p. 61). He sees peak experiences as times of intense joy and insight during which a sense of time, space, and self-awareness are lost. The person feels more real during the peak experience and when it is over he is convinced that something valuable and important has happened. The response is complete in itself, it is not seen as a means to some other end and no human purposes are projected into the object of perception (Dennis and Powers, p. 59-60). Maslow holds that aesthetic needs, along with cognitive ones, are basic needs of the self-actualized person (Dennis and Powers, p. 58); he states, "aesthetic peak experiences are seen to be a central aspect of human life" (Dennis and Powers, p. 61).

John Dewey's thinking on the subject of aesthetic response derives from the philosophy of Bergson, for like Bergson he sees aesthetic response as having the qualities of immediacy and intuitive grasping of the quality of the whole (Smith, 1966, p. 123).

Although, like Bergson, he sees aesthetic response as a union of the observer and the object, unlike any of the theorists presented so far, he sees this union as one which is both immediate and mediated, both subjective and objective, both emotional and intellectual (Madenfort, 1974, p. 12; Dennis and Powers, p. 56). For this reason, as we move along the continuum from aesthetic response as emotional-subjective to aesthetic response as intellectual-objective, Dewey appears as a transition between the two extremes.

Dewey contends that during aesthetic response the perceiver and the environment are united, they become so fully integrated that each disappears, the self and the object fuse to form a single, complete experience; it becomes impossible to distinguish between them except upon reflection (Dennis and Powers, p. 54). But reflection does occur. Although aesthetic response is first emotional, it soon becomes intellectual when the percipient begins to utilize congnitive powers to reflect upon the art work (Dennis and Powers, p. 56).

The relationship between Dewey's theory of aesthetic response and his general theory of education is congruent. Dewey holds that education is the process of acquiring experiences, reconstructing those experiences, allowing them to interact with previous experiences to reorganize, reconstruct, and transform those experiences to produce new insight and capacity for further growth (Dewey, 1916). His conception of the aesthetic response reflects this position. Dennis and Powers (p. 54) present him as stating that during aesthetic response meanings and values of prior experience unite with the qualities inherent in the work of art to produce a new, different experience and because of this the self undergoes reconstruction; there is not just a meeting of self and object, but a reconstruction of the self (p. 55).

Thus, to Dewey, aesthetic response is a total experience, a fusion of emotion and intellect, subject and object, present and past (Dennis and Powers, p. 56).

Aesthetic response as association falls within the emotional-subjective context but also overlaps the intellectual-objective frame of reference; thus a second bridge appears as a transition between the two extremes.

Albert Chandler (p. 285-96) writing on the work of Bullough and Myers synthesizes their classifications of aesthetic response to music into four types/levels of listeners. The lowest level, the objective type reports qualities of tones, defects of instruments and techniques and is concerned with the objective features of the music, e.g., "the second horn was too loud" (p. 391). The intra-subjective type reports real or apparent changes within his body; he localizes the aesthetic response in the self, e.g., "I felt warm in the ear" (p. 291). The associative type reports scenes, events, persons, he associates with the music. The most aesthetic response according to Chandler is the character type who imputes to the music itself moods, traits, activities, that is, the music is characterized as playful, morbid, etc.

Aesthetic response as association then seems linked to emotion, images, and concepts imbedded in memory. This idea is reflected by Donald Weisman, contemporary art educator, in his discussion of associational response as one of three kinds of aesthetic response. In The Visual Arts As Human Experience (p. 20) he distinguishes the associational response from the operational and pure aesthetic response. Associational response involves giving a word label or category to the aesthetic object/event; this word then elicits associated ideas, memories, images, etc. to create a chain reaction of associations (p. 20). That is, the aesthetic object is associated with a word which in turn is associated with ideas, images, etc.; thus the visual stimulus and the final associations are mediated by language.

Theorists who fall within what is here labelled the intellectual-objective frame of reference are more inclined to feel that before there can be an aesthetic

response the viewer must bring something to the aesthetic experience in the way of aesthetic attitude, imagination, expectations, critical thinking skills, etc. These theorists tend to posit a more abstract, objective aesthetic response in which concepts and symbols, expecially language (as with Weisman), mediate between the percipient and the aesthetic object/phenomenon.

Because she holds both theoretical positions, art educator Carol Holden can be seen as a transitional figure between the associationist camp of aesthetic response and the prerequisite conditions camp. She contends that aesthetic response requires that the viewer must bring to the aesthetic encounter (1) an aesthetic attitude, (2) an aesthetic imagination and (3) a facility with metaphoric language (p. 220). She also states that aesthetic response can be facilitated by enhancing the associations and past experiences that the viewer brings to the work of art (p. 223).

Art critics Clive Bell and Roger Fry (Morris-Jones, 1968, p. 97) present a theory of a unique aesthetic feeling response they call the "thrill". The Bell-Fry theory clearly states that this "thrill" occurs only if a certain pre-requisite aesthetic attitude or condition of receptivity exists; the percipient must be receptive enough to perceive the signals in the same order and intensity as generated by the work of art.

In Educating Artistic Vision, (p. 68) Elliot Eisner contends that aesthetic response is mediated as much by the frame of reference used by the viewer (that is, what he brings to the situation) as it is by the characteristics of the situation. He posits a theory of "selective response", which states that what we know determines how we respond. We bring to the experience certain expectations of what art should be and for those without well-developed skills, works that deviate from those expectations for art often elicit little response (p. 107).

He outlines six frames of reference the percipient brings to the work of art: In the experiential dimension he reports how the art work makes him feel, he responds to the forms of the art work; in the formal dimension the percipient is concerned with how the work is put together and responds to the total configuration and structure of the work; in the symbolic dimension the percipient must understand the meaning of any symbols used by the artist; in the thematic dimension understanding of the theme facilitates response; in the material dimension the percipient is concerned with how the material was used and when choice of material is directly related to the meaning the artist wishes to express, the viewer will get the meaning only if he has a knowledge background in this dimension; in the contextual dimension the viewer is concerned with the conditions under which the work occurred, such as, history, artistic movements, etc., and for an understanding response the viewer must understand these conditions (p. 107-110).

The point Eisner makes is that aesthetic response can be facilitated by developing the percipient's frames of reference. The initial feeling response to a work of art can function as a starting point for further analysis of the work of art (p. 107). This analytical response to art, the purpose of which is to heighten aesthetic response, consists of statements of description, statements of interpretation and statements of evaluation. Eisner advocates educating the percipient in the six frames of reference and contends that aesthetic response can be facilitated by use of verbal language (p. 225). When percipients use language relating to these frames of reference, that is, experiential statements, formal statements, symbolic and thematic statements, material and contextual statements, then aesthetic response to works of art is increased.

Ralph Smith, aesthetic educator, views aesthetic response as "prizing and savoring on the part of the subject" (1977, p. 309) and like Eisner, Smith

contends that aesthetic response can be facilitated to higher levels by education in perceptual skills and skills of critical analysis (Smith, 1977, p. 309, 314). He admits that this will result in less immediacy but more joy.

Harry Broudy, philosopher of aesthetic education, sees aesthetic response as both pleasure and interpretation (1966, p. 30-32). Sensory elements and formal relations are responded to with pleasure for their own sake, not as clues to meaning. In the interpretive phase, qualities and relationships within the work of art organize themselves into images of feelings and ideas. Broudy suggests that these images are communicated to the viewer by way of imaginative schemata. These schemata are root metaphors or archetypal images shared by all members of a culture, either by nature or by nurture (Broudy, 1966, p. 30). Via such root images the viewer knows certain information which cannot be expressed by discursive language, that is, during aesthetic response knowledge is revealed to the percipient by way of archetypal images, he infers meanings from these images (Broudy, 1966, p. 30-1). Broudy does, however, feel that aesthetic response can and should be cultivated by education just as much as cognitive powers are cultivated (Broudy, 1977, P. 256; 1972, p. 50; 1974).

Thus, to Broudy, what we bring to the aesthetic experience, without which we could not have the interpretive part of aesthetic response, is enculturated archetypal images.

This overview has presented the thinking of a number of theorists on the topic of aesthetic response. The remainder of the paper will deal with the postulation of a theoretical model of the aesthetic response. If we accept the position held by Eisner, Smith, Broudy and other contemporary art educators and aesthetic educators that aesthetic response can be influenced by educational intervention, then it seems clear that the first step along the path to such intervention is to establish a very clear and comprehensive picture of just what

constitutes the aesthetic response. Then, based upon this model, instructional methodology and curricular programs can be developed not only to facilitate the learner's movement through the aesthetic response but also to facilitate the depth and intensity of his aesthetic response.

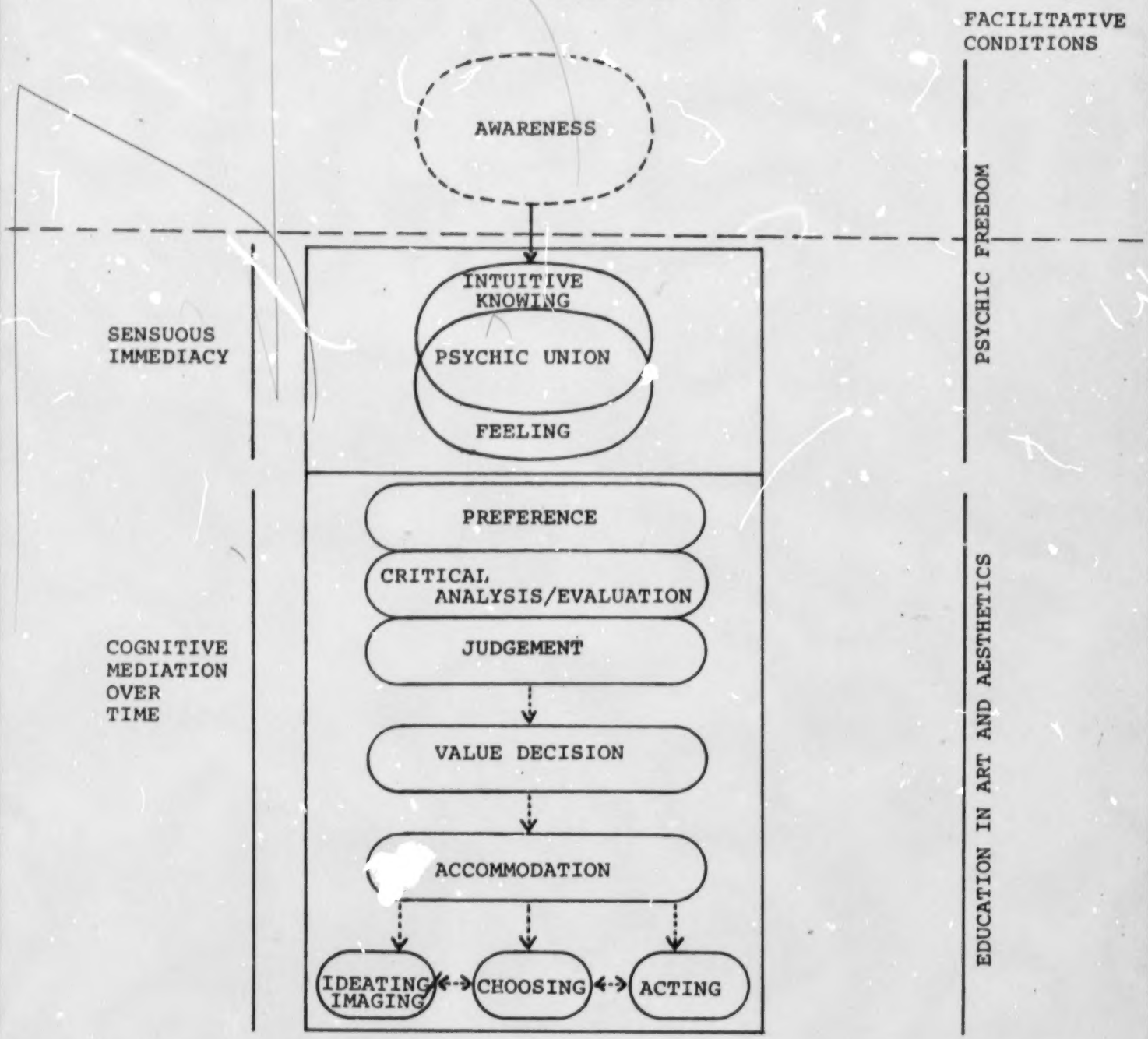
A Model Of The Aesthetic Response

The model of aesthetic response postulated here is hierarchical (see figure); each stage builds upon and incorporates the previous stage and stages cannot be skipped. Movement within the model is vertical (downward) until the final level where movement is lateral. The response sequence can stop at any stage; some people never move past the psychic union phase and many do not respond beyond the preference stage. The entire hierarchy is seen as the aesthetic response but at the same time each stage is perceived as a separate response because of spatial/temporal variables; that is, stages may be perceived as separate because they may occur in different places and/or at different times.

In this model the aesthetic response presupposes awareness of the aesthetic object/phenomenon; awareness is here considered to be a perceptual response and not a part of the aesthetic response. Perception, usually characterized by scanning for details, Gestalt or other behaviors, is the same for non-aesthetic as well as for aesthetic objects/phenomena.

This model postulates two phases of the aesthetic response, which exemplify two different ways of knowing: intuitive apprehension of reality and cognitive apprehension of reality (reality in this case being an aesthetic object/phenomenon).

The first phase is characterized by sensuous immediacy. It occurs all-at-once without any sequence of steps and involves only the sensuous/intuitive aspects of the percipient; it is pre-conceptual. This is the phase of psychic



union during which there occurs an instantaneous, intuitive grasping of the aesthetic object/phenomenon by the percipient. The totality of the object is

suddenly known by the self of the percipient, everything seems to fit perfectly into place, the viewer merges in complete unity with the object and there seems to be an exchange of psychic energy between the two. The psychic union is a flash of insight and great understanding during which the percipient feels that special knowledge has been suddenly revealed to him, and he will never be the same again.

The Psychic Union phase of the aesthetic response may actually extend for a period of time, perhaps up to a few minutes but to the percipient it is timeless.

Psychic Union is accompanied by a feeling state best described as excitement or arousal. This feeling response can be positive or negative, it can be pleasure, joy, anger, disgust, or any other emotion; however, the remainder of the response sequence will be characterized by the nature of this initial feeling. This phase may be accompanied by overt behaviors such as verbal exclamations, crying, laughter, non-verbal movements (e.g., movement toward or away from the object/phenomenon, change of stance, facial expression, etc.), or by physiological changes such as pupil dilation, change in galvanic skin response, speeded up pulse or heart beat.

The second phase of aesthetic response is mediated by concepts, that is, it is reflection about the aesthetic object/phenomenon and/or the percipient's sensuous response to it. The response now becomes progressively more and more mediated by concepts and is now cognitive-affective in nature rather than purely affective as before. The Cognitive Mediation phase of the aesthetic response is made up of eight stages which occur over a period of time.

(1) Preference is the initial stage of valuing, either for or against the aesthetic object/phenomonen and constitutes a committment on the part of

the percipient both to himself (having stated a value he is committed to it) and to the aesthetic object/phenomenon as an object of value. This stage may be accompanied by verbalizations of the "I like" or "I dislike" nature. An important aspect of the preference stage is that the percipient does not give reasons for liking or disliking the aesthetic object/phenomenon; preference is a personal and psychological affair and does not require explanation or justification.

(2) Critical Analysis/Evaluation. This is a stage of heavy cognition in which the percipient almost backtracks to develop an underlying rationale or justification for his value committment in the previous step of the response sequence. Here he asks of himself questions such as: What do I see in the picture, sculpture, etc., that is pleasing (ugly) to me? Why do I like (dislike) it? Thus the aesthetic qualities of the object/phenomenon are analyzed and evaluated to arrive at a judgement about the object/phenomenon.

(3) The Judgement is logical in character and is based upon the analysis and evaluation preceding it and can be defended or justified in terms of that analysis. The judgement may be verbalized by comments such as, "This design works, it is a well-designed art object", "How beautiful!", "A very weak statement", etc.

(4) The Value Decision is the stage at which the percipient makes a decision to value (or not to value) the object/phenomenon and also the qualities of that object/phenomenon which lead to the percipient's judgement. Although it usually does so, the value decision need not derive logically from the judgement: it may instead be a decision based upon emotion. For example, the percipient may judge an art object to be extremely well-designed but may decide not to value it because of personal psychological bias, e.g., it may

evidence sexual symbolism or utilize colors he dislikes.

Between stage (3) and (4) there may be very little time elapse (they may even be nearly simultaneous) or there may be days or even months in the case of certain art works. On the other hand, the percipient may never move beyond the judgement stage.

The judgement and decision to value stages may be accompanied by a feeling of elation due to relief over solving the problems of understanding and worth.

(5) Accommodation follows soon after the value decision. In this stage there occurs a restructuring of the percipient's personal aesthetic (i.e., his personal aesthetic value system). This stage is akin to the level of affect Krathwohl calls organization within one's personal value schema; it is also similar to Piaget's accommodation stage in which the state of disequilibrium is resolved when the new and conflicting information is accommodated by the learner. During aesthetic response this is the stage of change in the percipient, it is an internal accommodation -- an incorporation of new knowledge into the self. That is, this stage is an actualization of the earlier feeling (experienced during the psychic union) the feeling the viewer had that he would never be the same again.

The change in the percipient's personal aesthetic may be extremely slight -- he may even be quite unaware of it -- or it might be a great change. Whichever the case, the percipient now chooses and acts from a changed aesthetic perspective.

(6) Choosing and (7) Acting. Choices and actions are the highest level of aesthetic response and the more in accordance with the percipient's restructured aesthetic these choices and actions are, i.e., the more congruence there is between actions and values, the more highly developed the person is judged to be aesthetically.

Aesthetic choices and actions are responses which may occur at any time but the choices and actions which occur in time after the accommodation phase are considered to be responses to the aesthetic object/phenomenon which in itself initiated the change in personal aesthetic value structuring.

Examples of the aesthetic response of choosing are: choosing an experience with aesthetic potential v.s. one with little or no such potential; making aesthetic choices in everyday life, e.g., colors to wear, arrangement of personal environment, products to buy (well-designed v.s. poorly designed); choosing (or desiring) to possess the object.

Examples of the aesthetic response of acting are: sharing the aesthetic experience with another person; searching for sources of beauty e.g., seeking exposure to art by going to museums and galleries; recreating the initial feeling response by remembering, that is, activating an internal source of pleasure; creating an aesthetic object, e.g., writing a poem, painting a picture, making a sculpture.

(8) During the Ideating-Imaging response the percipient generates new ideas and images based upon the stimulus of the aesthetic object/phenomenon. This sparking of ideas/images may in turn lead to choosing and acting (e.g., creating an art object) and thus the movement at the end of the response sequence is lateral.

Although this model is hierarchical, defining a clear sequence of responses to the aesthetic object/phenomenon (1) different people reach different levels of response, some never going beyond the sensuously immediate and (2) there is a wide range in the individual's depth or intensity of response at any level.

There are certain conditions which facilitate aesthetic response both in the sensuous immediacy phase and in the cognitive mediation phase. Psychic

freedom is a facilitative condition for the first phase. When the mind of a person is free of emotional and mental concerns he is able to experience an aesthetic response. A person can perceive sunsets when he is burdened with worry and not experience an aesthetic response, while the same person can experience a similar sunset when he is free of such psychic constraints and experience an intense aesthetic response.

The condition which facilitates the responses involving cognitive mediation is education: art education and aesthetic education.

As with Kohlburg's stages of moral development, the emphasis in this model is on form of response rather than on content of response. It is not which art objects are valued or what choices are made or even which actions constitute one's aesthetic response, the important point is that one's judgements, value decisions, choices, and actions are based upon and derive from the aesthetic responses which precede them.

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